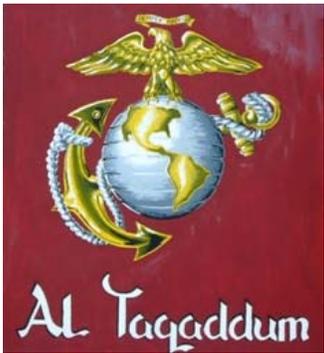




Tiger Tales



The Official Newsletter of HMM-262 *The Flying Tigers* February 2007



A Message from the Commanding Officer:

Flying Tiger Family Members, The Tigers have completed our first month deployed to Iraq. It has been an eventful 30 days since departing Okinawa. The Squadron made an initial stop in Al Asad where the Maintenance Department demonstrated what true professionals they are by assembling and testing all twelve Squadron aircraft in ten days. This was an amazing accomplishment and is a credit to the leadership and talent of all our maintenance Marines. It was only two weeks after arriving in country that we had all twelve aircraft ferried to our operating base.

Our advanced party, lead by a motivated Executive Officer, did an equally amazing job preparing our work spaces at Camp Al Taqaddum in short order. The Marines spent long hours, cleaning, and repairing the existing buildings as well as performing some minor construction work in order to bring our work spaces up to Flying Tiger standards. As it turns out, we have some

talented carpenters in the Flying Tigers.

A special thanks goes out to the Firebirds of MWSS-172 for building a Torii Gate for the squadron to assemble and set up in front of our spaces. The Torii now stands proudly in front of the squadron's buildings on the flight line displaying the Squadron sign and flanked by a set of Okinawan Shisa Dogs. A small touch of "home" brought to Iraq.

We began our flight operations on 7 February 2007 and haven't looked back since. We are providing 24 hour combat assault transport in support of the Multi-National Forces West (MNF-W). The majority of our flying is done at night under challenging conditions. The Tigers have adapted well to the new operating environment and settled right in to the demanding pace. My compliments to all the squadron aircrew on the way they have professionally conducted themselves these past few weeks.

We lost one of our own on 7 February 2007. Corporal Thomas E. Saba was flying aboard an HMM-364 aircraft when it was shot down while conducting an urgent Casualty Evacuation (CASEVAC) mission. All seven crew members were lost. Cpl Saba was a very talented, well liked, highly capable and experienced crew chief who had been a valuable member of the Flying Tiger flight line for over three years. Cpl Saba will be sorely missed but he will not be forgotten. He will remain in our hearts and in our prayers. We will

honor his memory by dedicating ourselves to successfully completing our mission here in Iraq. The Tigers have a difficult road ahead and there is much hard work to be done. We have hit the ground running and have exceeded all expectations during a difficult period. Your Tigers are well trained, well led, and well prepared to face the upcoming challenges of combat operations.

Last but certainly not least. Congratulations to our Maintenance Officer, Major Todd Ferry, on his selection for promotion to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Well done! Sincerely,
LtCol Mike Farrell
Commanding Officer

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Executive Officer:

The Marines have landed and the situation is well in hand. This month the Flying Tigers arrived aboard Camp Al Taqaddum (TQ), located on the northern shore of Lake Habbaniyah, half way between Al Fallujah and Ar Ramadi, Iraq. The Marines of HMM-262 aggressively replaced the soldiers of the 2nd of the 224th Virginia Air National Guard.

Upon departing Futenma, the squadron was divided into two elements. One element flew into Al Asad and began to reassemble and test all twelve of our aircraft. The other element flew into TQ and began to set up our new home. In an unprecedented 10 days time, all our aircraft were assembled and flown south to our newly awaiting and totally refurbished squadron area.

The Flying Tigers now occupy an outpost of ten wooden buildings and an expeditionary hangar. We also have our own private landing pad and enough ramp space to park our mission ready aircraft in a cocked and ready position. We named our enclave "The Rock" in deference to our home in Okinawa.



Cleaning up after the Army left...

All military units in Iraq are given tactical call signs that are meticulously de-conflicted as to avoid any confusion. The squadron's "Tiger" call sign was already in use so a new call sign had to be selected from a list of available

call signs. It did not take long to choose with pride the moniker of "Islander."

Now, 24 hours a day one can hear the synchronized beat of Boeing tandem rotors and smell the perfumed aroma of JP-8 as ISLANDER flights depart and return to THE ROCK. Our small wooden buildings shake as the Flying Tigers race to provide assault support to those Marines outside the wire.

Everyday, I stand in awe and admiration of our Marines, Sailors, and Junior Officers. In less than 100 days from notification, we are here in Iraq successfully flying combat missions. It is an honor to wear the same desert patch as these patriots. We have landed, and I can assure you, the situation is well in hand.

LtCol Damien Marsh
Executive Officer



Sergeant Major:

We have finally reached our final destination and all is well. The Marines and Sailors are settling in for our extended stay here at lovely Al Taqaddum, Iraq. Facilities here are centrally located and within walking distance, so Marines are getting quite a bit of exercise walking to chow, the exchange or their billeting. The walking is definitely a benefit because the dining facility is in the business of building Michelin men and women.

Billeting is not the normal style of living most are accustomed to, such as a barracks, towers, or single family homes, but at least it's not tent city. The "CANS" as they are

commonly referred to, are approximately 6 feet wide, 15 feet long, has two racks and wall lockers and they are occupied by two Marines/Sailors each. Most of the Marines and Sailors have given their "CAN" somewhat of a makeover (photos, posters, computers, TV's, etc.) in an attempt to give it the relaxing feeling of home after a hard days work.



The Cans

The 14 hour workday is very challenging as Marines give their very best to keep an antique aircraft flying at its optimum. It's not easy to maintain such a high operational tempo and keep morale up, but the Marines and Sailors of the Flying Tigers continue to set new standards in both these areas.

The weather here is very pleasant right now, but I am sure that is going to change and everyone is going to be affected by the extremely high temperatures and dusty conditions. Most of your Marines and Sailors should return home a few pounds lighter and maybe with a farmer's tan, but don't think it's because we are at the beach. It humbles me to stand in the presence of such outstanding Marines and Sailors.

Semper Fidelis,
Sergeant Major Thornton
"One team, one fight"

Administration S-1:

On the 25th of January the first elements of the Squadron S-1 arrived at al Taqaddum Air Base in

the Al Anbar province of Iraq. The Squadron was scattered from Diego Garcia to al Asad Air Base, and accountability was the first priority for the S-1. SSgt Hjorten immediately used one of his many trackers to ensure that there was an accurate tally of all personnel in country and enroute. At the time, elements of the Squadron were stranded in Diego Garcia waiting on the Air Force, at al Asad Air Base putting our aircraft back together, and still awaiting transportation from Camp Virginia in Kuwait. Due to the accountability procedures put in place by the S-1, the Squadron Commander always knew where his Marines and Sailors were.



Captains Taggart & Tyson Hang the Squadron Sign

Since that time the S-1 has kept busy in an environment which can sometimes resemble ground hogs day. The shop is divided into with one section working at nights from 8pm until 8am, and one section working days. The day crew consists of SSgt Hjorten, Cpl Arriaga, and LCpl Tomlinson. The night crew consists of LCpl Starks and PFC Mclver. The officers of the S-1 switch off according to whether or not they are on the night or day flying schedule. At all hours, someone is

in the S-1 to handle any crisis or issue which may arise in the course of a day.



LCpl Starks trouble shoots his Laptop...

No matter the job, the S-1 is up and running, with K-bars in our teeth, ready to take on the fight here in Iraq. Dedicated to the mission, our morale is high, and our fear is low. We are Marines, and we are proud to serve our country in its time of need. We appreciate all of the love and support we have received from our loved ones at home. Please keep us in your thoughts and in your prayers.
**Semper Fidelis,
Capt Ben Taggart**

Intel S-2 & Communications S-6:

As I write this article for the newsletter at 0300 Tuesday morning the past month seems like a blur, however I'm very proud of the work done and progress made by the Marines in the S-2 and S-6 over the past month and especially since we've arrived in theater.

The S-2 is usually referred to as the "duce", and since at this time in the squadron both shops fall under me, sometimes both are referred to as the "Ocho." In the S-2 SSgt Whited has led the Marines in giving briefs for the pilots each day at 0630 and 1830. All of the information briefed is classified so obviously I can't give any details. Just recently Cpl Neil and LCpl Long have started giving the briefs themselves.

Intelligence is a very important aspect in our Operations here and the Intel Marines are working 24-7 along with the rest of the squadron to make sure we've got the latest and greatest facts and figures and passing that information as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Speaking of passing information, that is what the S-6 is in the business of doing, and LCpl Lesnefsky and Cpl Carr have also been working non stop to make sure all of our comm. assets are up and running. The first weeks were the toughest running new wire into just about every building. We had some help from other units, but most was done by these two Marines in addition to setting up all 80 computers on 3 different networks, SIPR, NIPR, and NALCOMS. SIPR is the classified network, NIPR is unclass, and NALCOMIS is what our primarily Maintenance Department uses to track hours flown and maintenance performed on the aircraft. After about two weeks we are operating at just about 100%.



The Ocho on Ebay...

Our next big project is getting commercial internet in our "cans" so each Marine can communicate with friends and family without the restrictions the Marine Corps Network must add to our computers at work. Our goal is to have a wireless network up and running by March 1st, and those who sign up for the program will be able to e-mail and instant message from their rack, which is a great convenience since

the internet café's are a good 10-15 minute walk and sometimes just as long of a wait, and free time is definitely limited here.

Keep checking the 1MAW webpage for updates and photos we send in, and stay tuned for the next update from the OCHO.

Semper Fi.

Capt Adam Johns

Operations S-3:

For January, the Squadron focused on final preparations for deployment to OIF and on getting as many NVG training codes and flight leadership training flights accomplished in what little time we had left. We definitely made money in getting Major Spangenberg and 1stLts Schierling and Heintz signed off on their final NVG codes and getting 1stLts Koreis and Olmstead some of their initial codes. We managed to get a couple of section leader signoffs as well.

The 16th was the last fly day in January. We had to quit pestering the maintenance guys so they could focus on preparing the last of the aircraft for embark and deployment to Iraq. We of course sincerely appreciate their support right up to the last possible training day. Those last couple of weeks of flying made a significant difference in allowing us more flexibility to support our ground brothers in Iraq.



Capt Savage, coffee in hand...

Following several adjustments to the deployment plan (thanks to the United States Air Force) we finally

got operators on the ground in Iraq on the 24th, with the advanced party arriving on the 25th. We spent a couple of days in Al Asad, and then pushed as many personnel as possible to Al Taqaddum, aka TQ. We did the necessary coordination with our sister CH-46 squadron, the "Purple Foxes" of HMM-364, and started flying some of our operators on area familiarization flights along with their standard tasking.

The Purple Foxes have taken great care of us in that respect, along with providing volumes of information about operating in this area, for which we are enormously appreciative and hope to be able to return the favor somehow in the future. With some of our key personnel getting those flights accomplished, we will be off to the races in February in support of MAG-29, 2D MAW and Multinational Force West (MNF-W).

Once again, Ops wants you to know that we appreciate the support of you and your "operators" and want to make sure you know that the sacrifices you and your Marines make on a daily basis do not go unnoticed.

Maj Darren Brown, AOPSO

Logistics S-4:

The S-4 shop is settling into our spaces and our role aboard Al Taqaddum. The Squadron has been hard at work adding its own "Tiger Touch" to the previously sparse facilities and the S-4 has been working hard to improve the squadron facilities and to provide the squadron with its everyday needs. GySgt Lara, Cpl Kralicek, and PFC Atwell have made us feel at home by arranging new construction, supplies, laundry service, and quality of life requirements. They have also been hard at work making us safer by satisfying our Anti-Terrorism / Force Protection (ATFP) requirements.



The Muscles of the S-4...

Our newest additions to the S-4 shop, LCpl King and LCpl Harris, have been providing 24 hour armory service for pilots and aircrew. Maj Spangenberg, Crack, Eva, and Gizmo have been well consumed with their flying responsibilities and are fortunate to have such competent Marines to work with. We greatly appreciate their professionalism and dedication. With their assistance we will continue to answer the inevitable call, "S-4 wheres my. . ."

Capt Sewell USMC

DoSS (Safety):



Greetings from the "Rock." As many of you now know, the Rock is the affectionate name for the chunk of Iraqi real estate aboard Al Taqaddum Air Base where the Flying Tigers have set up shop. From the Rock, Flying Tigers have already begun to fix and fly the mighty Battle Phrog for missions in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, (OIF).

At the Rock, just as in Okinawa, the Flying Tiger Department of Safety and Standardization, (DOSS) is dedicated to preserving human and material assets while safely and effectively accomplishing our assigned missions. More simply said, we work hard to get the job done while looking out for one another.

Although the Rock was austere at best when the Flying Tigers arrived just over a month ago, our Marines and Sailors rolled up their sleeves and pitched in to make the Rock home, and a safe home at that. Aviation Safety Officer Capt Alex "Kush" Kushnir oversaw construction efforts and conducted a thorough site survey of the Rock ensuring that aircraft parking, taxi and take-off surfaces were properly spaced, marked, and lighted. Ground Safety Officer 1stLt Jon "Pookie" Spencer inspected work and living spaces, identifying and eliminating numerous occupational health and safety hazards.



Iraq Sunrise

Rounding out the DOSS team, NATOPS Officer Capt Bill "Drag" Morrow arrived in Iraq on February 20th after graduating from the Cockpit Resource Management Instructor and Aviation Safety Officer courses in Pensacola, Florida. Freshly armed with the latest tools for managing effective safety programs, Capt Morrow will continue to serve the DOSS and his fellow Flying Tigers well.

As always, rest assured that the Flying Tigers are in the good hands of trained professionals dedicated to safe and effective mission accomplishment.

"They shall mount up on wings as eagles." –Isaiah 40:31

Major Bob "Wedge" Sweginnis

Maintenance:

Despite a slow start getting out of Okinawa due to maintenance issues with the C-5's the Marines finally got where they needed to be. Not so much. All the different packages i.e. ADVON, main body arrived at different times. Despite this fog of war as soon as there were aircraft and Marines on deck maintenance was being done in order to start operations.



Maintenance was able to find the assets needed to build up or C-5 field stripped Phrogs. Other units including the Army were quick to lend a hand. Besides establishing good working relationships 75% of the maintenance department ran into friends that they haven't seen in a long time while in Okinawa.



The first Hover Check

Former Flying Tiger maintainers seemed to come out of the wood work to help. Although we got to a shifted around start, the build up was success with the first 262 aircraft breaking deck on 28 Jan 07. Neither rain, shine, nor a sand storm got in our way. We were able to start ferrying flights to TQ on 1 Feb 07 and finished getting everyone to our new home "The Rock" by 5 Feb 07.

Semper Fi

Capt Ken O'Connor, AAMO

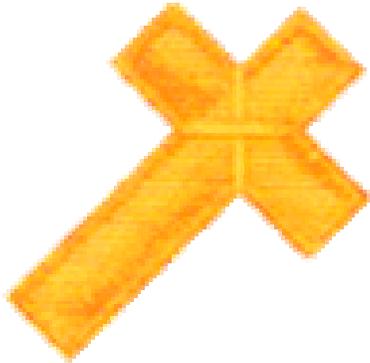


The Worlds Finest!

Chaplain:

Well the deployment is in full bloom about now and how are you holding up? In the pre-deployment brief there at the Foster Globe and Anchor I spoke about the five stages of the Emotional Cycles of Deployment. My intent throughout these newsletters, especially while HMM 262 is deployed, is to assist you along as to what you can expect and basically what is normal when families are separated. First of all in no other profession is family separation found as frequently as it is in the military service. These separations take many forms and no matter what form it takes, it creates a stressful, and at times, traumatic situation for all members of the family unit. Well one bright light is that you are well on your way into the second cycle of this deployment. Let me congratulate you for having survived the first cycle (Pre-Deployment). Just getting ready for the separation is tough because it

wears on you emotional because it basically stresses you out- just the anticipation of it all. So once again you have survived that stage and now find yourself in the Deployment cycle.



In this stage the spouses typically identify it as the period when anything and everything does go wrong. Cars break down, the plumbing backs up, the kids get sick and anything that can go wrong does. Many spouses feel overwhelmed and depressed. Many children feel the same way, but lack the skills to articulate their loss and confusion. For each family member, a vacuum exists where the departed Marine or Sailor has been. Children experience increased worries. The shadows in the corner are now boogey men. The top of the tree on the side of the house becomes a monster trying to get in. Nightmares and interrupted sleep may become a routine. Typically, however, the military spouse is expected to present the stiff- upper lip and be the model mother and father.

Also during this stage of the cycle you have noticed that technology has improved some of the separations with increased use of emails and the military support of calling through the Defense Satellite Network (DSN). Unfortunately this in itself can sometimes add to the anxieties by expectations by both the spouse and the service member. Increased phone bills, missed calls, on-phone or online arguments or even "silent"

times can add additional stress to the military families' worries. However, it is a boost when the Marine or Sailor calls home and connects with his or her family. Sharing in the milestones like births, anniversaries, and birthdays can greatly add to the family's ability to cope. The ability of the child to communicate with the deployed parent can alleviate some of the fears and add to the sense of security.

This quick little article is just to paint a picture that makes the statement that where you are now in this deployment is normal. However, if you feel like you are not where you think you should be and feel overwhelmed at the moment-there is someone that is available to assist you. If you have heard me speak, then you know I am here for you. Along with your KV we will help you through this deployment. We are a family and we will handle this time of separation like a family. Once again my office is located on MCAS Futenma, Building 511 and my office number is 636-3016 if there is anything I can assist you and or your family with during these next few months. Yours because I am His, **Chaplain Scott Morton**

Medical:

Greetings from the Medical Department in Al Taqaddum, Iraq! After three weeks of practicing medicine in a cubby hole with the S-shops while awaiting the departure of the Army unit, we have finally moved into the building that will become our Flight Line Aid Station. We are all enjoying our new jobs as construction workers as we piece together new floors, walls and doors. They'll be pictures posted when we finish the job!

This month's topic is foot care. Since we all spend an inordinate amount of time wearing boots, you can imagine that a lot of what we treat here in Medical is athlete's foot

or tinea pedis as the dermatologists call it. All fungal infections of the skin are caused by dermatophytes and the foot is the site most commonly infected. It occurs most often in young and middle-aged adults and the people most prone to it are those wearing shoes that promote warmth or sweating or who bathe in communal baths or showers. Sound familiar?



Corpsmen discuss foot care...

Classic skin findings include peeling and cracking of the skin between the toes and on the soles and side of the feet. Most people will also complain of itching or burning. Treatment is fairly simple and includes over-the-counter foot powders or creams such as Lamisil or Tinactin. More advanced cases may require the use of stronger creams and/or oral medications. But the key to all this is prevention. Wear shower-shoes in the shower at all times, take your boots off whenever you can, and change your socks at least every day. If your feet start to itch or you notice peeling and cracking, come see us, we'll be happy to provide you with the necessary powders and/or creams.

Meg Moore, LT MC (FS) USN



Key Volunteers:

We are a month into the deployment and I commend everyone for joining together in making our recent events successful. Our Valentine's Day Pity Party on February 9th was a GREAT success. Everyone had a wonderful time playing games and getting to know our sister spouses from HMM-265. The musical entertainment that Ian Courtney provided was a wonderful touch to a successful night...thank you to all who were able to attend and we look forward to seeing everyone at our future events.

Marine Corps Family Team Building and our HMM-262 KVN conducted a wonderful "Kids and Deployment" Workshop on February 17th. It was well thought out and very informative, there was a lot of participation from the kids and everyone seemed to go away from the event with more knowledge of how to handle separation from their family member. There were activities for the kids and an American "Flag of Hands" was the main attraction. This flag will be sent to our Flying Tigers in March for them to have a little touch from home.

I would like to remind everyone that the HMM-262 Key Volunteer Network is here to assist you with referral and resource information, so please do not hesitate to contact your KV should you need assistance.

Inspirational Quote:

Learn to enjoy every minute of your life. Be happy now. Don't wait for something outside of yourself to make you happy in the future.

Sheila K. Williams
HMM-262 KVC

Remain Behind Officer:

The spouses of HMM-262 have been busy since the deployment of our war fighters. We closed out January

with a KV professional development class entitled, "Communications in High Risk Environments."

February was very involved with the planning and execution of our joint Valentine's Day Pity Party with HMM-265. The event took place at the Habu Pit and was made especially enjoyable by 265's own "Crooner of Corrigedor", Maj Courtney, who provided musical entertainment. Door prizes and treats were enjoyed by all.

The monthly KV meeting was treated to two guest speakers. PAO 1stLt Garn gouged up the KVs on the tactics of dealing with the media while Chaplain Morton conducted the 'Caring for the Caregivers' brief for our volunteers.

Lastly, the 262 KVs and MCFTB put on a successful "Kids and Deployment Workshop." Crafts, painting, snacks, and a puppet show kept children and adults entertained throughout the afternoon. Rave reviews paved the way for guest puppeteer Col. Collins to pursue a new career upon his retirement.

Capt Jason Barnes USMC

A Letter of Thanks to the HMM-262 Vietnam Veteran's Association,

The OTIP supplies are here. A section of the "head shed" has been set aside to store and distribute all of the supplies sent by our brothers in the HMM-262 Vietnam Veteran's Association. These supplies were donated by a group of individuals who have taken it upon themselves to see that the newest generation of Flying Tiger war fighters is better supported and cared for than they were when they were in Vietnam.

The leader of this storied group is a guy named Joseph "Jake" Jacobs. A former sergeant and crew chief for HMM-262, he organized the HMM-

262 Vietnam Veteran's Association so that all former members of the squadron who served in Vietnam could get together and remember the good days in Vietnam, and honor those of their friends who did not come home.



All the OTIP Supplies!!

Today, the HMM-262 VVA carries on that tradition by taking care of their own who are now serving in Iraq. From the Marines and Sailors of HMM-262, we sincerely thank you for all of your efforts and the outstanding support we have been. Thanks for making the HMM-262 Morale Locker a reality and thanks for the service you have given to our Country.

In Memorial



Cpl Saba, RTB
You will not be forgotten...

Buy Squadron Gear Through the Mail!

The S-5 department recently teamed up with Gmail, PayPal and the United States Postal Service to give you the opportunity to easily purchase Squadron gear from anywhere in the world. Here's how it works:

- Send an email with your request to FlyingTigerSales@gmail.com
- That email will be automatically forwarded to the military email accounts of all the Marines in the shop.
- I will verify that we have the item you requested in stock.
- If we have it, I will reply to your email with your total (including shipping costs) and a PayPal payment button.
- When you click on the payment button, it will direct you to the PayPal website where you can pay for the gear using your credit card – you don't need a PayPal account.

- Once your payment posts, I will ship your item Priority Mail through the USPS. Additionally, I will provide you with a tracking number so you can follow the progress of your package.
- If we don't have the item on hand, I will let you know when we get them in stock.
- The shipping fees will start at \$5 for items less than one pound to cover a Priority Mail Stamp and Delivery Confirmation.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please me at FlyingTigerSales@gmail.com
I look forward to hearing from you!

Captain Andy Tyson
Adiutant/S-5 Officer

On the Horizon:
Ceramic Coffee Mugs
Glass Beer Mugs
T-Shirts
Zippo Lighters
Your suggestions!



Can Coozie - \$2 each



Patches - \$5 each



Coins - \$5

NEW!



Stickers - \$1 each



Hats - \$10



Visors - \$10



Travel Mugs - \$10

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